

Soil survey of Piedra Area, Colorado

Parts of Archuleta, Hinsdale, La Plata, Mineral, and Rio Grande Counties

By Ronald F. Bauer, Forest Service
Fieldwork by Ronald F. Bauer, Cecil R. Armstrong, W. David Loggy, and
Richard A. Thompson, Forest Service

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PIEDRA AREA is in the San Juan National Forest. The survey area includes parts of Archuleta, Conejos, Hinsdale, La Plata, Mineral, and Rio Grande Counties. The total area is 848,219 acres, or about 1,325 square miles. There are no towns in the area, but Pagosa Springs, Bayfield, and Ignacio are nearby. The Forest supervisor is located in Durango.

Approximately 84 percent of the area is under the administration of the Forest Service. It is used for recreation, livestock grazing, timber production, watershed, and wildlife habitat. Mining and mineral exploration are also permitted by federal law. Most of the rest of the area is used for privately owned ranches and for recreation.

Descriptions, names, and delineations of soils in this soil survey do not fully agree with those on soil maps for adjacent survey areas. Differences are the result of better knowledge of soils, modifications in series concepts, intensity of mapping, or the extent of soils within the survey.

general nature of the survey area

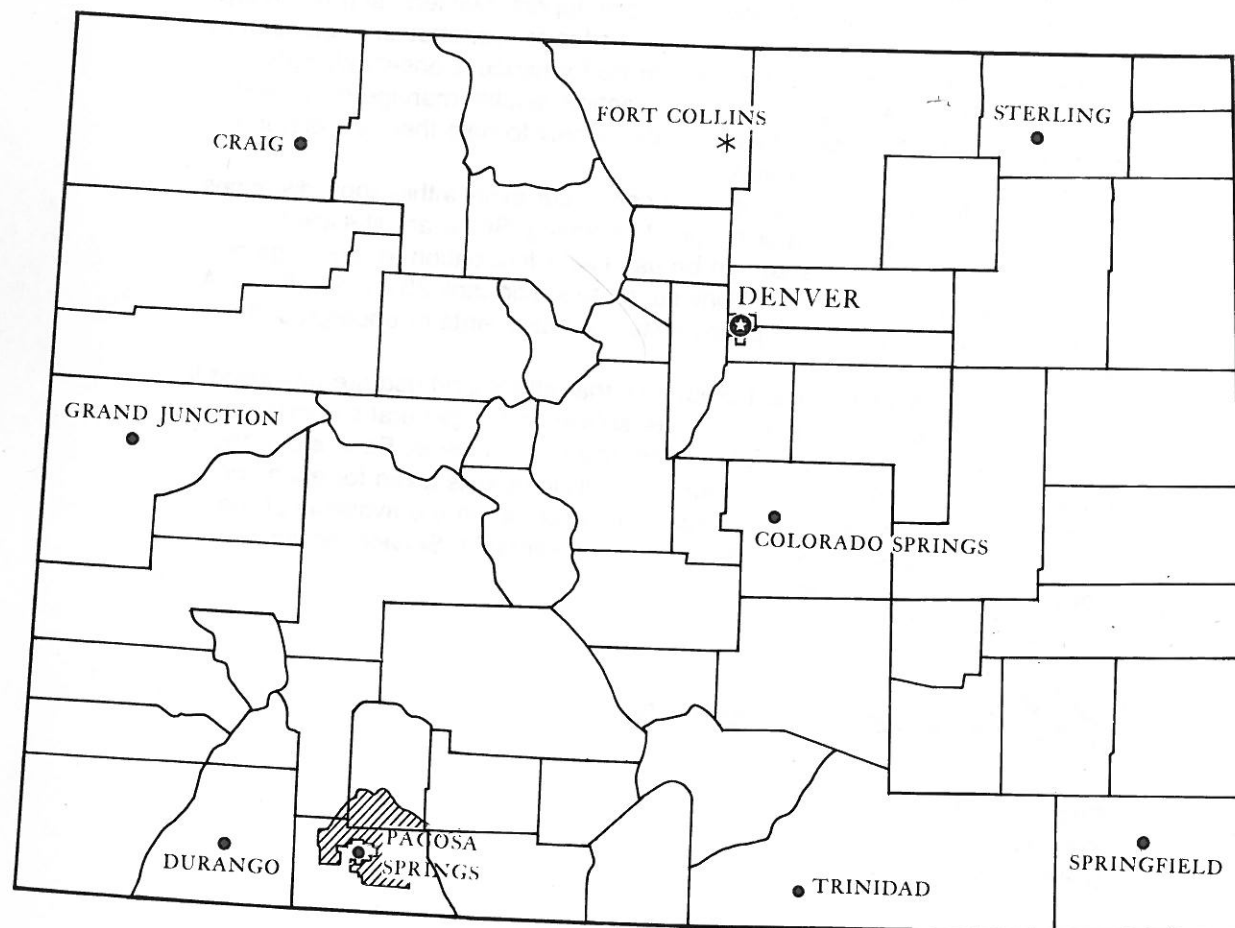
This section provides general information about the survey area. It discusses physiography and relief, climate, and vegetation.

physiography and relief

Piedra Area is in the San Juan Mountains of the Southern Rocky Mountains province and in the Navajo section of the Colorado Plateau province (3).

The San Juan Mountains are made up of nearly horizontal sheets of lava and tuff. They are maturely dissected. Total relief is about 5,900 feet. Peaks commonly are more than 13,000 feet high, and valleys are 2,000 to 4,000 feet deep. Glaciation has sculptured the mountains, and troughs, cirques, horns, cols, and serrate ridges are common. Terminal and lateral moraines and areas of outwash are at the edges of the mountain.

The small part of the survey area in the northwestern part of the Navajo section is underlain mainly by sandstone, shale, and some limestone. The beds vary



* State Agricultural Experiment Station

Location of Piedra Area in Colorado.